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THE CHILDREN'S PAPER



HENRY HUDSON'S LAST VOYAGE.

(From the painting by the Hon. John Collier, in the Tate Gallery.)

Hudson made many discoveries on the northern shores of Canada, and gave his name to Hudson Bay. Then provisions ran short, and his men, fierce with hunger, mutinied against him. Placing the captain, his little son, and the few sailors who were still loyal, in a little boat without food or water, they cast them loose upon the ocean, and returned to their own land; but Hudson and his companions were never heard of again.

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Good for the Squire !

BY MAY WYNNE.

"STOP!" roared a loud voice.

Ronald and Murray paused. They had been for a long sprint, and, being late for tea, had taken the short cut across Squire Randon's orchard.

No luck for them either, for there was the old boy, large as life, stumping towards them roaring like a bull.

"Oh, come on," urged Murray; "we don't want any of his back-chat: he's as surly as any old crab-apple."

Ronald agreed; but the Squire was not in the mood to stand any defiance from a couple of school lads.

He held his mastiff on a chain, and yelled a threat. Thatcher the mastiff had a reputation, and the boys halted.

"We were only taking the short cut, sir," apologized Ronald; "we were late for lock-up."

Squire Randon glared.

"Short cut!" he snorted; "don't you tell me. You're some of the young vagabonds who stripped my tree of Cox's pippins last week. I tell you I mean to make you both an example. Short cut! You can tell that to the marines. I've half a mind to give you both the thrashing you deserve."

Murray turned scarlet.

"Come on, Ron," he urged; "the chap's drunk. He doesn't know how to speak to gentlemen. We needn't waste our breath on him."

He nearly robbed the Squire of breath altogether. But before the latter could reply, in stormy language, the lads had done the trick. Taking

a short run, they cleared the brook which flowed to the left, and were up the opposite bank in a trice.

The Squire yelled threats, and Ronald fluttered his handkerchief. "Ta-ta," he chirruped; "save your breath to cool your porridge, and don't accuse gentlemen of thieving next time, unless you want to get into trouble."

"You'll be sorry for this," bellowed the Squire; "you'll be sorry for this."

And he was a true prophet.

Most unluckily there was a swell cricket match on at Balford Park the following Saturday—a sort of annual beano for the boys of St. Cuthbert's, when the School Eleven met a team raised by Sir George Balford's son and heir in a match which annually became historic. Though neither Ronald Fane nor Murray King was in the Eleven, both looked forward with the keenest pleasure to attending the match, where royal entertainment was given to the School; and it was with a sense of foreboding that they saw the headmaster stalk next day into the schoolroom with Squire Randon.

"Boys," said the Head sternly, "which of you trespassed on Squire Randon's grounds yesterday and spoke insultingly to him? Answer at once, or——"

Ronald and Murray rose. They felt that the Head *ought* to listen to their explanation. He did nothing of the kind; instead, he fixed them with his most baleful stare.

"Apologize instantly," he commanded, "to Squire Randon. And in addition, for such conduct, remember you will not accompany your

schoolfellows to Balford Park on Saturday."

The boys flushed to the roots of their hair.

Squire Randon glared at them.

If Ronald had said what he wished, it would have been "Old beast!" But he did *not* dare—any more than you would if you had been in his place. And the apology was a poor affair—not in the least sincere.

"If I had my way," said the Squire, "I'd thrash the pair of you. Lawless young vagabonds!" And off he marched, unappeased with such fifth-rate penitence.

When he and the Head had gone a general clamour of sympathy arose.

"Were you priggish the old chap's apples?" asked Hilyard, grinning.

Murray frowned. "No, we weren't," he snarled; "we were just taking the short cut home. As a matter of fact, some of the chaps had been taking the apples—Cox's orange pippins. I think I *could* mention names, and all I can say to the Lower Fourth is, 'Let *me* catch them at the game.' " And his tones were so terrific that the whole Lower Fourth trembled in its shoes.

"Shall we sign a petition," suggested Lockhart, "explaining things to the Head, and asking him to change the sentence to lines? He's not such a bad old sort."

But the majority agreed that this was of no use. The fiat had gone forth. Saturday would see Fane and King stewing in their own juice in the college-schoolroom, whilst their comrades watched cricket, ate ices, and generally glutted themselves at Bal-

ford Park! Pretty sickening for sake of a short cut.

Both Ronald and Murray felt intensely sore over the business, and when Saturday came and bore away rejoicing comrades, they decided to cast dull care to the winds and go for a jolly good walk.

It was a top-hole sort of day; but though for the first half-mile the boys grumbled hard, they got the better of their ill-temper at last, and jogged along, yarning away, and making for Copley woods, where the nuts were ripe.

As they passed the Grange woods Ronald heard a shout, and halted.

The Grange woods belonged to Squire Randon. Some one in there was shouting for help.

Ronald snorted. "*Let* them shout," quoth he.

"Help! help!" screamed the shrill voice; "he's . . . drowning."

"It's a kid," quoth Murray.

"It would be trespassing on the Squire's grounds to go in," retorted Ronald grimly.

Some one came running up the path towards the stile. It was a small girl who wore her hair in pigtails. She was the most distressful maiden. Tears rolled down her face.

"Oh, come!" she entreated; "it . . . it's uncle's pet dog. It . . . it's Thatcher, and he's drowning."

Here was a kind of insult on injury. It's all very well to play the forgiving hero, but *last* time those boys had dealings with the Squire's liver-coloured mastiff, the latter had shown an intense desire to fasten his great teeth into their legs.

But Miss Pigtales was piteously eloquent. "He's . . . he's tangled in the w-w-weeds," she sobbed. "It's awful! He'll so . . . so . . . soon be dead."

"Come on," growled Ronald; "we'd better have a go—eh?"

Murray nodded; he couldn't imagine walking off.

Miss Pigtales rushed them to the river bank. It was a tragic scene. Thatcher, after herculean struggles, was resigning himself to death. The current was strong, the weeds many, and Thatcher's chain was answerable for the trouble.

It did not take the boys long to take headers into the "scene of action."

Miss Pigtales stood on the bank, breathless in suspense. Thatcher may or may not have recognized recent enemies; but he lay watchful, and without any trace of animosity, as those flannel-clad figures approached.

Murray swam like a trout. He had guessed what was wrong too, and a second or so later Thatcher was free of his chain. What a business it was!—floundering, splashing, grunts and gasps, with a few squeals from the agonized Pigtales, who at this juncture took to her heels and fled through the woods for further assistance.

Murray had Thatcher in tow—or, rather, Thatcher had Murray. Free of his chain, Thatcher made good his battle with the weeds. He and his rescuer reached the bank together. Thatcher, shaking himself most vigorously, galloped off to welcome his master, who came rushing along the bank, followed by panting Pigtales.

It was the latter who warned Murray that all was not well.

"The other boy!" she shrilled, in crescendo tones. "The . . . other . . . boy!"

Murray curled round and saw further trouble.

The weeds, with the tenacity of the "Old Man of the Sea," had collared Ronald this time, and the boy was helpless.

The Squire, like an antiquated cherub, was blowing his whistle with cheeks which were puffed to bursting-point. Thatcher stood on the bank and barked.

"They'll both be drowned!" shrieked Pigtales; which was not pleasant hearing.

Ronald was more quickly exhausted than Thatcher had been, and the cruel weeds dragged him down.

Murray dived, and dived again. He was grimly resolute, but would he ever free Ronald? The latter was almost unconscious. He hadn't a kick left in him, and Murray's heart was pounding in the queerest way beneath his ribs. The Squire's whistle and Pigtales' squealing became in his ears like the distant shriek of an engine, varied by a mighty splash.

Thatcher couldn't stand seeing his rescuers drown without coming to the rescue. He came in the nick of time. Murray had all but freed his chum, but he had no strength to carry him to the shore. Thatcher took the task from him.

The Squire had done with whistling, and was shouting orders. A boat manned by the gardeners and the gamekeeper came up the stream. Mur-



ray was flopping in his efforts to follow Thatcher and Co., and Pigtales was in tears.

"Good dog!" cried the Squire huskily; "good dog!"

Thatcher was up the bank, dragging Ronald in triumph. Jenkins, the keeper, had hauled Murray into the boat. But neither of the two-legged heroes of the adventure had any definite memory of what followed. In fact, the next chapter opened for them between hot blankets in the Grange spare bedroom, with Mrs.

Bramble the housekeeper, with a beaming countenance, bringing in hot drinks. Mrs. Bramble was the worst-named woman in creation, for in reality she was the sweetest old dear you can imagine, with a delightful weakness for cramming people, especially boys and girls, with nice things to eat.

Arrayed in their own well-baked garments, Ronald and Murray were perfectly capable of responding to Mrs. Bramble's invitation to eat, drink, and be merry.

They tea'd in the housekeeper's

room, with Mrs. Bramble and Pigtales for company. They were the merriest of quartettes. Ronald and Mrs. Bramble paired off as perfectly as Pigtales and Murray. It was Pigtales who informed her heroes that Uncle Henry, *alias* the Squire, had gone to tell the headmaster at St. Cuthbert's of their safety.

"He said you *were* brave," said Pigtales, with eyes as big as saucers and much awe in her voice. "And I think so too. I'm sure Thatcher wants to say 'Thank you.'"

The boys only said "Rot" to such flattery, but they liked it all the same. They liked Mrs. Bramble's cocoa too; also her shortbread, her buttered scones, her ginger cake, and her buns. They found the work of rescuing distressful mastiffs exceedingly good for the appetite, and Mrs. Bramble urged them all the time to greater efforts, whilst Pigtales sat and wondered.

After all, the boys agreed that they had enjoyed themselves quite as much as the other chaps had done, and in this case there was "more to follow."

When the Squire returned, he sent for them both to come to his study. Thatcher lay stretched in luxurious ease upon the hearth, and thumped his tail in welcome to his rescuers, who were solemnly shaken by the hand by the Squire.

"I wish to thank you both," said the latter, "for your very plucky behaviour. You not only did a brave thing, but a generous, in saving my dog's life. I repeat that I am grateful, and I will do more. I own that I did you both a gross injustice in accusing

you of stealing my apples. I am sure such lads as you would be incapable of such an action. Will you forgive a very short-tempered old man—eh?—and agree to be friends in future?"

There was a humorous twinkle in the Squire's eyes as he held out his hand again, and you can guess how heartily it was shaken by the boys.

For the rest you may be interested to hear that, no later than the next Saturday, Ronald and Murray received an invitation to tea at the Grange, when Miss Pigtales presented each of them, on behalf of Thatcher, with a magnificent pocket-knife—the topping sort which has everything and can do everything. The boys were delighted with their gifts, and thanked the Squire gratefully. "Though," added Murray with a grin, "we didn't want anything to remember our adventure last week, sir, for we *enjoyed* it."

I think the Squire agreed with Pigtales, who was heard to remark from the background, "I like this week best."

On the whole, so did the boys; but then, you see, they had never tasted Mrs. Bramble's Eccles cakes before!

Motto for March.

*Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.*

ALEXANDER POPE.

Golden Text for the Month.

*Now let your hands be strengthened,
and be ye valiant.*—2 SAMUEL ii. 7.

Our Bible Story.

NEHEMIAH, THE WARRIOR BUILDER.

IT was considered a post of great honour in Babylon, at the palace of Shushan, to be cupbearer to the king, to fill the golden goblet with the king's special wine, and to serve him at the royal table. Not only must the cupbearer be an honourable and trustworthy man, but something else was also required of him—he must always show a cheerful face when on duty, for it was thought to be unlucky if sad looks should meet the king's eye.

Now Nehemiah, one of the captive Jews, was cupbearer to the King of Babylon when this story begins. He was a great favourite at court, and did his service cheerfully, although at times his heart was sad when he thought of his own land, and the ruin of his beloved city, Jerusalem.

Very little news ever reached him of that far-away city; but one day a little company of Jews arrived who brought tidings from Jerusalem, and among them was a near relation of Nehemiah, the king's cupbearer.

It was a day of great excitement for all the Jews in the city: news from home was as welcome as water to a parched land. But this news, alas! brought no refreshing joyfulness. It was a sad account which the men gave of their beloved land. Sorrow and want were everywhere. Jerusalem was laid in ruins, the walls broken down, and the gates burned. It stood there defenceless against any enemy that cared to attack it.

As Nehemiah listened to all this he

bowed his head and wept. But what was the use of tears? There was a better thing to do: he would pray to God for help. And as he prayed a splendid plan came into his head.

The king, Artaxerxes, was seated upon his golden couch, and the queen sat beside him, in the great hall whose pavement was of red and blue and white marble. White and blue curtains were fastened by purple cords and silver rings to the marble pillars. From the gardens came the scent of roses and the breath of orange blossoms. Everything was beautiful and pleasing in the king's sight. Only Nehemiah, the king's cupbearer, was at fault. He came forward to present the golden cup, and the king frowned as he looked upon him.

"Why is thy countenance sad?" he asked at once, for Nehemiah had never looked like that before.

For a moment fear clutched at Nehemiah's heart—it was dangerous to offend the king in the smallest matter—but he answered bravely.

"Let the king live for ever," he said. "Why should not my countenance be sad when Jerusalem, my city, is in ruins, her walls broken down, and her gates burned?"

This was surely the time to speak of his great plan, and in his heart he prayed to God to teach him what words to use, as the king went on to ask him what it was he wanted.

"If it please the king," he said, "that thou wouldest send me unto my own country, that I may build up its walls."

It was a bold thing to ask; but the

very boldness of the cupbearer seemed to please the king, and his request was granted. And not only was Nehemiah allowed to go, but he was given letters of safe conduct, and a written order that he should have all the wood he needed from the king's forest for the building which he had planned.

It was a big work for one man to set



out to do. But no difficulties daunted Nehemiah: it was work for his country and his God, and that thought strengthened his arm and filled his heart with courage. He had no use for the words "fear" or "failure."

After a long journey across desert and plain, he at last arrived at the ruined city, and found it in even a worse state than he had expected.

For three days he rested, and then late at night he secretly and silently slipped out of the city, and went all round its broken-down walls. There, in the dim starlight, he saw the great piles of rubbish lying in dark heaps; the black gaps where no gates stood spoke to him of the desolation of the city; but the sight, instead of discouraging him, only made him keen to begin the work. He had told no one in the city yet what he had come to do; but next day he called all the Jews together, and laid his plans before them.

It is wonderful what one man's enthusiasm can do. All the men who listened to Nehemiah were soon almost as anxious to build up the walls as he was. As they listened to his words, all their love for their country and pride in their city began to stir in their hearts and they cried out as with one voice, "Let us rise up and build."

Of course, the enemies who lived amongst them and in the country round about were watching what was going on, and they laughed when they heard of the great plan. What could this little handful of weak people do?

But they forgot that behind their weak hands was the strong arm of God, and the stout heart of His servant Nehemiah, who replied to their mocking words the calm assurance, "The God of Heaven, He will prosper us."

And before long their enemies saw that they had mocked too soon. Day by day the walls grew higher and higher. Nehemiah's plan worked well. Everybody was given his own special part to build, and worked with all his might. Even the women helped. The daugh-

ters of one of the rulers of the city were toiling there. Then, as now, the women knew that to serve their country was a better thing than to live in dainty ease—that toil-worn, roughened hands were a badge of honour in the great service.

The mocking enemies who watched the work began to be uneasy. The city would soon be a stronghold if this went on. Some plot must be laid to stop the work, some cunning plan of attack thought out to make it a failure.

But they little knew Nehemiah. He was just as good a soldier and general as he was a planner and builder, and he knew how to put courage into the hearts of the people. "Be not ye afraid of them," his voice rang out; "remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses."

Then he divided the people into two companies: one half to be regular soldiers, ready to fight whenever the enemy attacked, and the other half to go steadily on with the building, but with weapons ready too. The men who worked only with one hand held a sword in the other, and those who needed both hands for their work had their swords fastened to their sides.

From the first faint light of dawn to the time when the stars began to come out the people worked, and all night long they watched and waited, ready at the sound of the trumpet call to assemble for the attack and beat back the enemy.

In vain, too, the enemy tried to set a

trap for Nehemiah. They pretended to be friendly and to want peace, and they begged him to come and talk things over with them, meaning that he should never return; but he only answered that he was too busy—it was a time for work, not talk. Every plan failed, and always the walls rose higher and higher.

It was not only the city walls which Nehemiah made strong, but the time the work went on he was trying also to make the people stronger and better, and more fit for victory when it should come. He bade the rich people help the poor, instead of grinding them down; he showed all the workers how they might deny themselves for the common good, and how they should give up everything that hindered the work and was displeasing to God.

No wonder with such a leader the day of victory would not be far off. In a wonderfully short time the walls were finished, the gates were put up, and Jerusalem was a strong and fortified city once more.

Then Nehemiah ordered a great feast to be held—a feast of dedication, or the giving of the walls to God. Two processions of joyful people were formed, and as they swept round under the strong walls, and met in the Temple to give thanks to God, a song of praise and great rejoicing went up, which swelled to such a mighty burst of sound that it echoed far over the land, and was heard outside the city walls.

So Nehemiah proved what it was possible for a man to do when strengthened by the call of duty to serve his country and his God.

The Brown European Bear.

WHEN you were younger, I am pretty sure that somebody or other used to tell you the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears ; and I am pretty sure, too, that you thought to yourself as you listened, " Well, *that's* not a true tale ! "

But perhaps it *is* a true tale ; anyhow I am quite sure that there is a great deal of truth hidden away in the story of the little girl of very long ago who went out hunting for berries and found in the forest the home of three brown bears. For the tale is an old one, and in the long-ago days bears *did* prowl about the British forests and roam about the British hills ; and if they didn't actually live in houses with beds and porridge-plates and spoons, they saw to it that they had comfortable homes in the caves, or in the hollow trees, or in secret hidey-holes.

What kind of bears were they ? They were big brown bears ; and though none of them prowl over our islands now, other European countries are not so fortunate. There are very many bears in the Russian forests ; in the Alps and the Pyrenees Mountains they are to be found ; in Spain and France ; and away up north in Sweden and Norway, too. There are little European children to-day who might go out berry-picking and meet a bear, and a pretty big one, too !

But not a very fierce one, perhaps ; for the brown bears of Europe are not cruel and wily like the grizzlies, and they do not feel so hungry, when they see a human being, as a huge polar

bear feels. You see, brown bears satisfy a great part of their appetites by feeding on fruit and roots, insects, and little creatures of the woods ; they like honey, too, when they can get it. Some old fables tell of bears who stole honey from the bees and got well stung for their bad behaviour ; and the bears of to-day do not seem to have learned wisdom yet. The Scandinavian people, indeed, declare that the wild bears of their country make a habit of trying to dig up the telegraph poles at night. Can you guess why ? It is because, in the darkness, when they hear the murmuring of the wires overhead, the *greedy* beasts feel quite certain that the sound can be nothing else but the buzzing of busy bees, and they set to work to dig for honey !

There comes a time in the autumn when the big beasts can get very little to eat. What do you think they do then ? While they are still as fat as happy barrels, they tuck themselves up for a winter sleep. Away in the forests they build themselves a shelter of boughs and leaves, and try to forget all about meals until the spring. Sometimes one of them wakes up with an uncomfortable empty feeling, and prowls about till he finds a dainty—perhaps a sheep or two from the hills, or a cow from some shed, or, very likely, a much simpler snack of fish or some small wild animal of the woods. But it is always the father bear who takes these mid-winter excursions ; the mother bear does not venture out at all.

And for a very good reason, too. At the New Year her cubs are born, two or three of them ; and helpless



little blind scraps they are, who take a month to learn to see, and three months to learn to eat anything more grown-up than milk. Their mother never leaves them till the spring: she goes without meals herself and stays at home to feed them, giving them lessons, too, in walking, swimming, and climbing; playing games with them, and loving them very much. But that does not mean that she spoils them—dear me, no! The baby bears get plenty of spanking and whacking and boxes on the ear, for mother bear stands no nonsense, and her cubs soon learn to mind their p's and q's.

Especially as the spring draws near; for mother's temper gets worse and worse as the cold weather goes. And do you wonder; for her children have been a great responsibility in lots of ways, and she has had no meals since last autumn. Hungry people are often cross, and the big mother bear is really very hungry by the time that the warmer days arrive, and it is time for the winter home to be left behind. Indeed, she comes out feeling simply ravenous for a good square meal.

Then is the time that it is safest to keep out of the way of the brown bear—when she looks gaunt and thin, and hollow-eyed, and has two or three hungry cubs at her side which she must feed as well as herself. She would eat you up as soon as she saw you, I fear, if you chanced upon her path in the early spring. But at *any* time of the year, if you dared to interfere with one of her cubs, she would turn on you in rage, hug you to death, and tear you to pieces with her great claws. A

brown bear mother who had lost her young ones has been known to attack a whole band of armed men. On one occasion, too, a traveller, who stole two baby bears during the absence of their mother, had a dreadful race for his life. He certainly would not have lived to tell the tale had he not been quick-witted enough to drop one of the cubs as he ran. The poor mother was so relieved to see her baby that she gave up the chase, and devoted herself to it for a while before continuing her angry rush; and by that time the traveller had got clear away with the other small member of the family.

Bears have been taught to dance from very early times; the sole of their feet are so huge and flat, that they can stand quite easily on their hind limbs. They really haven't an ear for music, too, and perhaps they enjoy the songs that their master sing to them as they troll round; but it is a poor kind of amusement, I think. There is a tear mixed up in our laughter as we watch the antics of the dancing exile bear.

Still, things are better for British nowadays than they were in the olden times. I have read that Julius Cæsar took some of our brown bears back home with him for purposes of amusement—the “Caledon bears,” he called them—and they figured in many fights in the great amphitheatres of Rome. Later on, too, even as far down as the days of King James the First, bearbaiting were baited in public by packs of dogs, and the Good Queen Bess enjoyed the sport hugely. I am glad to think that times have changed.

Michael Angelo.

ON the 6th of March, in the year 1474, a special star was shining up in heaven, and down on earth in the little town of Caprese a newborn baby was wailing. Lodovico Buonarroti, the proud father of the wailing atom of humanity, noted the star most carefully, for he had been watching the sky to see if there was any sign there to foretell the fortune of his son.

"A fated and happy star," said he to himself joyfully; and afterwards the wise men, who could tell fortunes by the stars, told him he was right.

"We will call him Michael Angelo," said his father. It was the most splendid name he could think of, the name of the great warrior archangel, the messenger of God. Surely that name would fit the most glorious destiny that awaited the little one.

Very soon after the birth of his son, Lodovico's term of office as mayor of Caprese came to an end, and he returned to Florence to take up his abode at the villa of Settignano, three miles from the city. Most of the people living around about the villa were stone-cutters, for there were many stone quarries there, and it was to the wife of one of these stone-cutters that the baby was sent to be nursed.

In the pure fresh mountain air little Michael grew strong both in mind and body, and the first sounds he learned to know were the ringing of the hammer and the working of the chisel in the stone quarries.

As the years went on other children

were born to Lodovico, and Michael Angelo did not always seem such a wonderful boy in his father's eyes after all. Indeed he was rather a disappointment when he was old enough to be sent to the school kept by Messere Francesco of Urbino. He was not at all a brilliant scholar, and his progress was slow and quite commonplace. It was even hinted that he was rather a dunce, and he certainly neglected his lessons whenever he possibly could so that he might have more time for drawing. Give him a paper and pencil, and he forgot about everything else.

It was extremely vexing, for his father had set his heart on the boy being a credit to the family. What was the use of this drawing which seemed to be all that Michael cared about? He had no wish that a son of his should be an artist, and meanwhile it was most annoying to find the white-washed walls of the house and terrace scribbled over with all sorts of designs and figures. There was nothing to be done but to whip the boy soundly and see if that would put any sense into his head.

But the whippings did little good after all. Michael only crept back again, sore in body and mind, to his beloved drawings, and seemed to think it was quite worth while to suffer pain for the sake of his work.

No one at home understood why he should be so obstinate and determined, but he had a friend who knew all about it and who was a great help and comfort. How Michael envied his friend Francesco! He was quite a little boy but he was not obliged to go to school

and learn dull lessons, and instead of being whipped when he tried to draw pictures, he spent his whole day at the studio of Messere Ghirlandajo, with nothing to do but to learn all about drawing and painting the livelong day. Every morning Francesco brought to Michael designs borrowed from the master's studio, and these Michael studied and faithfully copied, and every day the desire of his heart to become an artist grew stronger and ever stronger.

At last Lodovico saw that it was no use to scold and whip the boy. His heart was evidently set on becoming a painter, and nothing else would content him. The golden dreams which the father had dreamed over the baby's birth slowly faded into grey disappointment. He decided that there was no chance now of Michael making a splendid fortune in the wool or silk trade, such as he had planned, but that the boy must be allowed to have his way and continue that useless drawing.

But although Lodovico was disappointed, having so many other children to educate and but little money coming in, still he was determined to do his very best for his son. In all Italy there was no painter to equal Domenico Ghirlandajo, and with him the boy should be placed.

It was rather a surprise to find that after all Michael was not an idler, and that the hours spent over his drawing had not been wasted. It was seldom that a boy was paid any wages during the first year of his apprenticeship, but Messere Ghirlandajo found that Michael's work was so good that it was

worth paying for, and it was arranged that he should receive a salary nearly ten pounds a year.

Now at last Michael Angelo was to work with all his might at the thing he loved best, and like a young giant put his whole mind and strength to tasks. So well did he work and wonderful was his talent that Ghirlandajo soon found there was not much left to teach him, and that he could actually make corrections on the master's own sketches.

Ghirlandajo saw this quite clearly himself, and perhaps felt some envy and bitterness. It was not pleasant to feel that a pupil, a mere boy, was stripping his master.

They were working together one day in the great chapel of Santa Maria Novella when the master went silently behind the boy and watched him at work.

"This boy knows more than I do," said the master, amazed at the drawing he saw. It was time Michael should leave the studio.

So the year of his apprenticeship came to an end, and Michael Angelo commenced at once to study sculpture in the new art school opened by Lorenzo the Magnificent in the Garden of the Medici. Francesco was still his friend, and the boys now worked together in great content.

It was not long before Lorenzo noticed the keen-faced boy working away so silently and diligently. He watched him as he modelled soft figures in terra-cotta and was astonished at his masterly touch.

"Terra-cotta is but poor stuff

work on," said Lorenzo; "try instead what thou canst make of this block of marble."

There was a marble face of an old faun lying close at hand, and Michael set to work at once to copy it. He had never handled a chisel before and knew nothing about marble, but he never dreamt of saying so. He meant to carve that marble to the best of his ability. Difficulties were only there to be conquered.

So he worked away, forgetting all else but just the faun's face that was hidden in the block of marble. He chipped and he cut away, and as he worked the life seemed to spring out of the stone and an exact copy of the old faun grinned out of its marble prison.

Lorenzo was amazed next day when he returned to see what the boy had made of his piece of marble. It was the most wonderful copy he had ever seen, and it was even better than the original, for Michael had introduced ideas of his own, and had made the laughing mouth a little open to show the teeth and tongue of the faun. Lorenzo noticed this and turned with a smile to the young artist.

"Thou shouldst have remembered that old folks never keep all their teeth, but that some of them are always wanting," he said.

Lorenzo only meant this as a joke,

but Michael was too much in earnest to understand jesting. He seized his hammer and struck out several of the teeth at once, never stopping to think if it would spoil his work.

From that moment fortune began to smile upon the boy of the Medici Garden. Step by step he began to climb the ladder of fame, just as the stars had foretold. As he had seen



within his first piece of marble the face of the faun, so he set out now to free with a giant's strength all the wondrous shapes that lay imprisoned in the marble blocks; and thus to-day the world owes some of its most beautiful statuary to the hammer and chisel of the boy who had been so well named Michael Angelo, after the warrior archangel, the Messenger of God.

The Mysterious Bands.

TAKE a full sheet of a large newspaper—for example, the first and last pages (which make one sheet) of a paper like the *Daily Telegraph*—and cut three straight strips (*a*, *b*, *c*) about three inches wide, as shown in Fig. 1. Now



Fig. 1.—The mysterious bands—first stage.

join the ends of these strips in the following manner in order to make three loops.

In the strip *a* bend round *D*, and paste it on to the under side of *E*.

Make a loop of *b* in a similar manner, but giving the strip a half turn, and



Fig. 2.—Showing where to cut loops of paper.

pasting the under side of *F* to the under side of *G*.

In the third strip this twist is replaced by a full turn of the paper, so that *H* is pasted on the under side of *N*, as in the first instance.

When making these bands it will be quite easy to conceal from the spectators the twists you have given

to the paper; and, indeed, the success of the trick depends upon this part of your preparation not being observed.

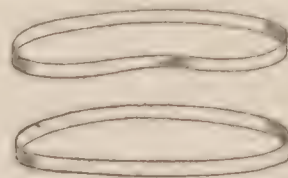


Fig. 3.—Band cut into equal loops.

Now comes the exhibition of the trick. Cut each of the loops into two in the direction of the dotted lines in

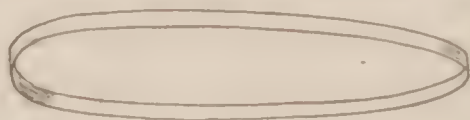


Fig. 4.—Showing large loop twice the size of original.

Fig 2, when the following astonishing result will be obtained.

The band *a* will be cut into two equal loops, as in Fig. 3, the loop *b* will turn into one large loop twice the size of the



Fig. 5.—Showing loop *C* transformed into two links of a chain.

original as in Fig. 4, whilst the loop *c* will be transformed into two links of chain, as in Fig. 5.

It need hardly be remarked that the twists given to the original bands are responsible for this strange result.

Can You Guess This?

TAKE away one of my letters—I am unchanged; take away two—I am still the same; take away all my letters—I am just the same as before. Give it up? I'm the postman, of course!

THE SERIAL STORY.

The Slap-Bang Boys.

BY ANGELA BRAZIL.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DESERTED COTTAGE.

GIBBET COPSE was extremely wet both underfoot and overhead, but the dug-out had kept comparatively dry. They enlarged it a little, and then set to work to reconnoitre the wood with a view to fixing outposts. Bob apportioned a scouting ground to Bert and another to Billy, and set off himself in the direction of the ruined cottage. He walked as noiselessly as possible, and availed himself of the protection of trees and bushes. There was a fence at the edge of the copse dividing it from the garden of the little deserted house. Bob swung himself cautiously over, and advanced under cover of the neglected gooseberry bushes.

He had just reached the corner of the cottage when he heard voices, and bolted like a rabbit into a small tumble-down shed. Crouching here, behind the broken door, he could command a view of the pathway. Two men walked out of the deserted house, and stood in earnest colloquy only a yard or two from his hiding-place. One was tall and fair, with a light moustache; the other had his back to the shed, but when for a moment he turned, there was no difficulty in recognizing the pedlar of yesterday. What was he doing there? Bob wondered. This lonely spot was hardly a likely place

in which to hawk his wares. The boy strained his ears to listen to the conversation; but though he could hear well enough he could not understand. It was palpably in a foreign tongue. The man with the fair moustache seemed excited, and the pedlar was apparently soothing him and arguing with him. In the end he appeared to agree, for he spread out his long fingers with a dramatic gesture, and exclaimed:—

“Ja! Ja! Hier! Gegen fünf Uhr!”

Bob's acquaintance with the German language was limited to half a year's study of Ahn's Grammar; but he knew enough to interpret that. They were going to meet again at the cottage at five o'clock. On what errand? He was so afraid of being discovered that he hardly dared breathe. Suppose they were to peep inside the shed and find him? Fortunately they began to walk the opposite way towards the gate of the garden. Here, after a few last words, they separated—the tall, fair man going over the moor in the direction of Easby, and the pedlar taking the path that led towards the village. Bob crept from his cover, and, peeping through the bars of the gate, watched them out of sight. He felt there was something highly suspicious in their conduct. Anybody speaking German must undoubtedly be an alien and an enemy, and bent on nefarious practices. He went back into the copse, and finding Bert and Billy, held a hasty council of war. The first step was evidently to explore the cottage.

“I wonder if they were alone, or if they've left anybody inside?” ventured Bert.

"I wish I'd got that pistol!" groused Bob. "Connie was a rotter to take it away. I could skin her!"

Bob stationed Bert by the gate to watch the moor, and Billy within call in the garden; then, grasping the trowel as a handy weapon, he made the plunge. The cottage was empty. It was a one-storied building, consisting of a single room with a broken wooden partition at the end. A medley of rubbish lay on the floor, empty bottles, scraps of torn wallpaper, old shoes, rags, and smashed and abandoned household articles. Bob searched through them carefully, but could find nothing incriminating. The whole place was evidently just as it had been left when its former tenants removed. He looked on the window-sill, on the shelf, behind the partition, and even inside the brick oven that occupied the corner.

The room had a big, old-fashioned fireplace with an enormous chimney, and after examining the oven Bob paused here. The grate was full of ashes, but they looked as if they had been disturbed. The plaster at the back was newly scratched. There was a muddy footmark on the hearthstone. Bob hesitated and thought. The next moment he was scrambling up the huge old chimney. About eight feet from the ground it opened out widely, forming a small chamber on each side that lay over the ingle nooks. It was very dark and sooty, but in the dim light he could just distinguish some apparatus that seemed familiar. Up the chimney were some poles and wires. Instantly the truth burst upon Bob.

"The swinish beasts! They've been rigging up a 'wireless'!" he gasped.

CHAPTER VII.

SLAP-BANG TACTICS.

THIS was indeed a discovery. It was from here that news was being transmitted to the enemy and signals were made at night. By accident he had come across a Hun hotbed of treachery. He climbed down the chimney again, and whistled softly for Bert and Billy. They retired to the wood and held a consultation in the dug-out. They all agreed to reject the assistance of the village policeman.

"Johnson's a blithering old idiot!" said Bob scornfully. "He'd come lumbering up, and probably stand sentry at the door, and then that precious pair would see him before ever they reached the cottage, and bolt off over the moor in a jiffy. No! we want town detectives for this job, and the question is how to get them out before five o'clock."

"Go home and bicycle into Wibblethorpe," suggested Bert.

"There wouldn't be time."

It was Billy, the youngest of the three, who made the brilliant and unrivalled suggestion. The Brigade always allowed him the credit for it afterwards.

"The goods train's almost due, and it always stops in the cutting, and whistles before it goes into the tunnel," he remarked.

Bob sprang up with a suppressed yell. "Thunder! You're right! We'll

get the driver to take us into Wibblethorpe. I sat on the wall last Saturday and grinned at him and saluted, and he grinned back and shouted, 'Like a ride?' He was off before I could answer him; but we'll get on board to-day. Come on, this instant! We must tear as hard as we can."

It was a fair distance across the moor to the railway cutting; but the Slap-Bang Boys were excellent runners. Bob, having the longest legs, naturally got on the quickest. He called out encouragement to the others.

"Hurry up, you blighters! Stretch your pins, can't you? D'you want to miss it? Then scoot."

Billy's cheeks were already scarlet, and his chestnut mop stood on end with his exertions; but he was a game little chap, and managed to put on an extra spurt. Five minutes later the Brigade were sitting dangling their legs over the wall that bounded the cutting. Punctual to a minute, the goods train came jangling along with snorting engine and clanging trucks. As Billy had prophesied, it drew up underneath and whistled.

"Hello!" bawled out Bob in his lustiest voice.

The engine-driver lifted a coal-grimed face towards the skies as if expecting a vision of angels.

"Cheero!" he replied, catching sight of the decidedly earthly cherubs on the wall.

"Look here! We've got to get into Wibblethorpe on urgent public business. We want the police at once. Will you take us?"

Bob had scrambled to that point of

the wall that exactly overtopped the engine.

"Drop, and I'll catch you!" replied the driver laconically.

Bob hung by his hands, and for a moment his feet dangled free; then he committed himself to space. The driver made an expert grab, and deposited him on the floor of the engine. What one Slap-Bang Boy can do so can his brothers. Bert and Billy descended with equal rapidity. Giving a jangling jerk, the train started and shot into the tunnel. When it emerged the Brigade were squatting on lumps of coal, waving their caps in triumph, and yelling at the pitch of their voices:—

"Slap-bang! here we are again!

Here we are again!

Here we are again!

Slap-bang! here we are again!

Three jolly dogs are we!"

Three small boys entering a police station and requesting to be allowed to lodge special information is an unusual incident, and at first the Superintendent could scarcely credit their tale; but Bob showed such circumstantial acquaintance with wireless apparatus, and was so evidently speaking the truth, that the officer ended by believing him.

"I know the place," he remarked. "We had it under observation six months ago, and I suppose they took alarm and cleared out. They must just have come back and set up their wireless. That hawker is a 'suspect' too, but we never could nail him. We'll attend to the matter. Now you go through that door to the right, and the Sergeant will give you some bread and

cheese and see you off by the next train home. Mind you don't blab a word of this to anybody."

"You bet you can trust us!" replied Bob, saluting.

The Superintendent chuckled softly to himself, and laid his plans, the result of which was that the pedlar and the man with the fair moustache walked that afternoon into a very neat little trap, and before nightfall were lodged in Wibblethorpe jail.

Surprises seldom come singly, and that very same evening, when the boys were playing in the hall, the front door opened, and mother made her appearance. She stood for a moment blocking up the doorway, with a look of strange excitement on her face.

"Grannie's better, and Aunt Belle is with her, so I was able to leave," she announced. "I've brought a present back with me," and standing aside, she disclosed a figure in khaki. The boys made a simultaneous rush.

"Daddy! Daddy! Daddy!"

"He telegraphed to me that he'd got his leave," explained mother, "so I went to London to meet him. We're to have him for a whole precious week. Where's Connie?"

That night at bedtime the Slap-Bang Boys confided to Daddy the entire business of the Brigade. He did not scold about either the clock or the Nankin jar, though he confiscated the pistol, and strictly forbade the purchase of firearms in future.

"Not bad for amateur scouts. Glad you've been able to do something to serve your country, you young harum-scarums!" he remarked. "You were

certainly prompt. I fancy we'll have you all in khaki yet before we're finished with you."

"I shouldn't wonder if Billy becomes Prime Minister some day," added mother proudly.

THE END.

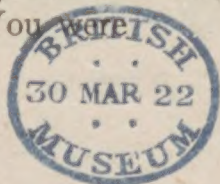
A Sad Case.

BY CLARA DOTY BATES.

I'M a poor little kitty,
And alas! when born so pretty,
That the morning I was found,
Instead of being drowned,
I was saved, to be the toy
Of a dreadful baby boy,
Who pinches and who pokes me,
Holds me by my throat and chokes
me,

And when I would vainly try
From his cruel clutch to fly
Grabs my tail, and pulls so hard
That some day, upon my word,
I am sure 'twill broken be,
And then, everybody 'll see
SUCH A LOOKING KITTY!

That baby has no pity—
Thinks I'm only a kitty;
I won't stand it—nor would you!
'Tis no use to cry out m-e-w.
Listen! Some day I shall scratch,
And he'll find he's met his match;
That within my little paws
There are ever so many claws!
And it won't be very long,
If this sort of thing goes on,
Till there'll be a kitten row—
Such as has not been till now;
Then, my lad, there will be found,
Left upon that battle-ground,
SUCH A LOOKING BABY!



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